

A NEW SPECIES OF EVOLVULUS (CONVOLVULACEAE)

FROM VERACRUZ, MEXICO

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EVOLVULUS CHOAPANUS McDonald, sp. nov.

A E. lithospermoides Mart. floribus solitariis axialibus et spicis terminalibus bracteis inflorescentiae ovatis vel ellipticis corolla 7-8 mm longa recedit.

Herbs erect, suffrutescent, pilose. Stems erect or ascending, terete, 20-40 cm long, 0.5-1.0 mm in diameter, branching at the base, smooth, appressed pilose, hairs silver, ascending; internodes 6-9 mm long. Leaves simple, persistent, sessile; lamina linear-lanceolate, 1.0-1.8 cm long, 2-3 mm wide, chartaceous, upper surface green and glabrous or glabrescent, undersurface silver-sericeous, margins entire, apex attenuate or rarely acute, basally attenuate; venation palmate with 3-5 major nerves. Inflorescence variable, flowers solitary and axillary on proximal portions of the stems, and in terminal, bracteate, spicate capitula, flowers 1 per node, bracts 3-12 per spike, ovate or broadly elliptic, 2-5 mm long, 2-5 mm wide, densely sericeous to lanate, margins entire, apices attenuate; pedicels pendulous or erect during anthesis, reflexed when in fruit, terete, to 2 mm long, ca. 0.5 mm in diameter, green, sericeous; sepals equal, herbaceous, green, lanceolate, basally subovate, 4-5 mm long, 1-2 mm wide, membranous; corolla infundibular-campanulate, 7-8 mm long, the tube ca. 2.5 mm long, limb subentire, dilating gradually, white to pale blue, 8 mm wide, the plicae glabrous, interplicae appressed pilose; stamens included, inserted at base of corolla tube, white, glabrous; styles 2, equal, ca. 4.5 mm long; stigmas 2, equal, linear. Fruit not known.

TYPE: Mexico, Veracruz, 11 km S of hwy. 180 (Cardenas to Coatzacoalcos) towards Las Chospas, in tropical savannah, 50 m, 17 Jun 1970, Orozco 188 (Holotype XAL; isotypes F, MEXU).

Distribution. Known only from type locality.

Evolvulus, a New World genus of Convolvulaceae with about 100 species, is divided into two subgroups on the basis of inflorescence morphology (Oostrroom, 1934). The "sparsiflori" complex (ca. 80 spp.), of widespread distribution throughout the Americas, includes species with simple, axillary inflorescences, while the "spicati" complex (ca. 20 spp.), hitherto known only from South America, includes species with terminal, bracteate, spicate capitula. The newly described taxon, E. choapanus, represents the first species of the spicati complex reported in North America, as it inhabits tropical savannahs in the Río Uxpanapa watershed of southern Veracruz.

The new species keys most closely to E. lithospermoides (sect. Phyllostachii Meissn.) on the basis of linear-lanceolate leaves with a green and sparsely pubescent upper surface, leaflike bracts that form the spicate capitula, and lanceolate sepals (van Oostrroom, 1934). However, E. choapanus is distinguished from E. lithospermoides by leaves with a silver-sericeous undersurface, flowers both in proximal nodes and in terminal spikes, inflorescence bracts ovate to broadly elliptic, and a corolla 7-8 mm long with limb to 8 mm wide. Evolvulus lithospermoides has leaves with a sparsely pubescent undersurface, flowers restricted to terminal spikes, inflorescence bracts linear-lanceolate, and corollas 1.2-1.5 cm long with limb 1.0-1.5 cm wide.

A number of Convolvulaceae that occur in the humid regions of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec have distributions extending into South America, including I. batatoides Choisy, I. fimbriosepala Choisy, I. phylloomega (Vell.) House, I. tiliacea Willd. and Odonellea hirtiflora (Mart. & Gal.) Robertson, among others. The new species appears to fall within this same distributional pattern, although isolation from its South American relatives has apparently led to speciation.

#### Literature Cited

- Oostrroom, S. J. van, 1934. A monograph of the genus Evolvulus. Med. Bot. Mus. Herb. Rijksuniv. Utrecht 14:1-267.